

To the freemen of Vermont. Fellow-citizens. I have been frequently requested by gentlemen of different political parties to write out in full a history of the part that Vermont has taken in relation to slavery [18-].

TO THE FREEMAN OF VERMONT.

Fellow-Citizens: —

I have been frequently requested by the gentlemen of different political parties to write out in full a history of the part that Vermont has taken in relation to Slavery. In answer to those requests, and to letters I have received from individuals, and for the information of my brother farmers, I have caused to be printed the following extracts from the recorded lessons of wisdom of our fathers. Not that here is all in relation to the subject of slavery on record; far from that.— There is not any sentiment or word in favor of slavery to be found among our archives, or published by order of the Council of Safety or Assembly.

I claim that the first tree of liberty planted on this continent was by the hands of the Green Mountain Boys, and watered by Hancock, Adams, Warren, Washington, Jefferson, and other like spirits. On the 19th and 20th of October, 1774, the Green Mountain Boys held their first Congress, and recorded their protest against the Boston Port Bill and the Duty on Tea. I have the original record in my possession, a copy of which you find below. I claim that the first drop of blood shed in defence of American Liberty was shed at Westminster, March, 1775. The Green Mountain Boys captured the first fortress from the enemy (Ticonderoga) 10th May, 1775, August 16th, 1777, we captured the left wing of Burgoyne's army; and on the 19th of September, same year, Col. Herrick's regiment of Green Mountain Boys, early in the morning, took off Burgoyne's chariot wheels near Ticonderoga Landing, by capturing 291 British officers and soldiers, 200 batteaux, and two sloops laden with military stores and provisions; which was the principal cause of Burgoyne's surrendering so soon.

Below you have the title-page of the first Anti-slavery Sermon preached in this State, that has come to hand; also the text. You have an extract from our Bill of Rights; title-page and text of the first Election Sermon; the first Law on record; the Law of 1786 relating to negroes. Happy I should have been, had room permitted, to have furnished you with our Assembly's Address to the first Presidents, Washington, Adams and Jefferson, and their answers. I give the answers of Washington and Adams.

You will also find below other extracts; and in your Town Clerks' offices, the Journals of the Legislature, from which you may learn the part that Vermont has taken in relation to slavery; which

you will see to be always in the spirit of the Bill of Rights and the noble Preamble of the Law 1786, mentioned above.

Your humble servant, HENRY STEVENS.

PROTEST AGAINST ACTS OF PARLIAMENT.

At a meeting of the Committees from (a number of) Towns in the Country of Cumberland and Province of New York, held at the County Hall in Westminster on the 19th and 20th Days of October, 1774, to consider a Letter very lately received from Mr. Isaac Low, Chairman of the Committee of Correspondence at New York, dated 31st May, 1774, and to consult on measures proper to be taken at this important Day,

—Present 18 delegates from 12 Towns, Col. John Hasseltine chosen Chairman.

After having read Mr. Chairman Low's Letter, and the act of the British Parliament in levying a Duty or Tax on Tea for the purpose of raising a Revenue in America,—the Boston Port Bill, so called, and divers other late Acts of the British Parliament,—sundry debates being had thereon, *Voted*, That John Grout, Esq., Mr. Joshua Webb, Doctr. Paul Spooner, Mr. Edward Harris, and Major William Williams, be a Committee to take into consideration the aforesaid Letter and divers aforesaid Acts, and report to this Meeting,—who reported as follows:—

This County being in its infant State, contending with the hardships of subduing a Wilderness, converting it into fruitful Fields, being situated here in a corner, at a considerable remove from the Populous civilized parts of the Countries, conceive they by their own experience in a small degree feel the sufferings of their Ancestors, the first Planters in America, who endured hunger, cold, and other distresses, until they by their arduous industry found suitable relief from their bountiful Fields and at their own Expenses; and as the People of this County were chiefly born in some one or other of the New England Provinces, and conceive them to be at least as loyal to the King as any subjects he can boast of, [they] are surprised to find by the late Acts of Parliament that all America are deprived of that great Right of calling that their own which they by their Industry have honestly acquired; are surprised to find a Power arise in Britain which with impunity say they have a Right to bind the Colonies in all cases whatsoever, and Attempt to Exercise that Authority by taking at their pleasure the property of the King's American Subjects without their consent. Especially since some of the former Kings of Great Britain by their Charters granted to their Subjects in New England, their Heirs and Assigns, and all others which should settle within certain Boundaries divided into Colonies, all the Liberties and Privileges of Natural free-born subjects of England. Yet, notwithstanding this, that such a Power should arise under the meer inspection of the King, unrebuked, to claim all

American Property, and actually to take as much as they please, in direct breach of the solemn Compact between a former King, which, on his part and his successors, he made with the first Planters of these Colonies and others that after should be born among them, or join them, or on the sea when going thither: and we don't conceive those whose rights are as aforesaid solemnly declared, are more sacred in respect of the security of their Property than the Rights of this and other Colonies, whose Rights are only Natural as british Subjects;—for he that has nothing than he can call his own but what another has power at pleasure lawfully to take away from him, is, in the fullest sense of the word, slave, a Slave to him who has such Power; and as no part of British America stipulated to settle as slaves, the Privileges of British Subjects is their Privilege; and whoever endeavors to deprive them of these Privileges is guilty of Treason against the American as well as the British Constitution; therefore, Resolved—

1st. That as true and loyal Subjects of our gracious Sovereign, king George the Third of Great Britain, &c., we will spend our lives and Treasure in his service.

2d. That, as we will defend our King while he reigns over us his Subjects, and wish his reign may be long and glorious, so we will defend our just Rights as British Subjects against every power that shall attempt to deprive us of those Rights while Breath is in our Nostrils and Blood within our Veins.

3d. That, considering the late Acts of the British Parliament for blocking up the Port of Boston, which we view as Arbitrary and unjust, (inasmuch as they have condemn'd them unheard—dispens'd with all Modes of Law and Justice, which we think necessary to distinguish between lawfully obtaining Right for Property injured and Arbitrarily enforcing to comply with their Wills, be it right or wrong) we resolve to assist them in the defence of their Liberties to the utmost of our Abilities.

4thly. Sensible that the strength of our opposition to the late Acts consist in an uniform, manly, steady and determined mode of Procedure, we will bear Testimony and discourage all Riotous, Tumultuous and unnecessary Mobs, who endeavor to injure the Persons or Property of harmless Individuals, but endeavor to treat those Persons whose Abominable Principles and Actions shew them to be Enemies to American Liberty, as loathsome Animals, not fit to be touch or have any society or connection with.

5thly. *Resolved*, That we choose a Committee to correspond with the other Committees of Correspondence of this Province and elsewhere, and that Mr. Joshua Webb of Westminster, John Grout, Esq., Deacon John Sessions, Major William Williams and Capt. Joab Hoisington, be a Committee as aforesaid.

6th. *Resolved*, That the thanks of this Committee be given to the Committee of Correspondence in the Capital of this Province for the Notice they have taken of this infant County.

7thly. *Resolved*, That Mr. Chairman forward these Resolves to Mr. Low, Chairman of the Committee of Correspondence at New York, and communicate to him by Letter the reasons why his Letter to the supervisors of this County was answered no sooner.

8th. *Resolved*, That Col. Hazeltine, the Chairman, have thanks of this Committee for his good services as Chairman.

The above report being divers times read by Paragraph, *Voted* , Nem. Con., that the same be accepted as the sense of this Meeting and as their Resolves.

By Order of the Convention, John Hazeltine, *Chairman*.

A WELL TEMPERED SELF-LOVE A RULE OF CONDUCT TOWARDS OTHERS.

A SERMON, Preached at Windsor, July 2, 1777, before the Representatives of the Towns in the Counties of Charlotte, Cumberland, and Gloucester, FOR THE FORMING THE STATE OF VERMONT.

By Aaron Hutchinson, of Pomfret, A. M., Pastor of the Church in that and the two adjacent towns, Hartford and Woodstock.

Also, thou shalt not oppress a stranger; ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. [Exod. 23: 9.]

To loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free; and that ye break every yoke; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh. [Isa. 58: 6, 8.]

But he that doth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done; and there is no respect of persons. [Cor. 3: 25.]

So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. For he shall have judgement without mercy that hath showed no mercy.—[James 2: 12, 13.]

DRESDEN: PRINTED BY JUDAH PADOCK AND ALDEN SPOONER.

TEXT— Matthew 7: 12.

Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so them; for this is the Law and the Prophets.

CHAPTER I. A Declaration of the Rights of the Inhabitants of the State of Vermont.

That all men are born equally free and independent, and have certain natural, inherent, and inalienable Rights, amongst which are the enjoying and defending Life and Liberty; acquiring, possessing, and protecting Property, and pursuing and obtaining Happiness and Safety. Therefore, no male Person, born in this Country or brought from over Sea, ought to be holden by law to serve any Person as a Servant, Slave, or Apprentice, after he arrives to the Age of twenty-one years, nor female in like Manner, after she arrives to the Age of eighteen years, unless they are bound by their own consent after they arrive to such age, or bound by law for the Payment of Debts, Damages, Fines, Costs, or the Like.

JESUS CHRIST THE TRUE KING AND HEAD OF GOVERNMENT.

A SERMON, Preached before the General Assembly of the STATE OF VERMONT, On the Day of their First Election, March 12, 1778, AT WINDSOR.

By Peter Powers, A. M., Pastor of the Church in Newbury.

Mat. 28: 18— *And Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying: All power is given unto me, in Heaven and in Earth.*

NEWBURYPORT: PRINTED BY JOHN MYCALL.

1778.

ACTS AND LAWS

Passed by the General General Assembly of the Representatives of the Freemen of the State of Vermont, at their Session at Bennington, February 11 th, A.D. , 1779.

AN ACT for securing the general Privileges of the People, and establishing Common Law and the Constitution as Part of the Laws of this State.

Forasmuch as the free fruition of such Liberties and Privileges as Humanity, Civility, and Christianity call for, as due to every Man, in his Place and Proportion, without Impeachment and Infringement,

hath been and ever will be the Tranquility and Stability of Churches and Commonwealths; and the Denial or Deprival thereof, the Disturbance, if not Ruin, of both,

Be it enacted, and it is hereby enacted by the Representatives of the Freemen of the State of Vermont, in General Assembly met, and by the Authority of the same , That no Man's life shall be taken away; no Man's Honor or good Name stained; no Man's Person shall be arrested, restrained, banished, dismembered, nor any ways punished; no Man shall be deprived of his Wife or Children; no Man's Goods or Estate shall be taken away from him, nor any Ways indamaged, under Colour of Law or Countenance of Authority, unless it be by virtue of some express Law of this State, warranting the same, established by the General Assembly; or in case of the Defect of such Law in any particular Case, by some plain Rule warranted by the word of God.

That all the people of the American States within this State, whether they be Inhabitants or not, shall enjoy the same Justice and Law that is general for this State, in all Cases proper for the Cognizance of the civil Authority and Courts of Judicature in the same, and that without Partiality or Delay. And that no Man's Person shall be restrained or imprisoned, by any authority whatever, before the Law hath sentenced him thereto, if he can and will put in sufficient Security, Bail, or Mainprise, for his Appearance and good Behavior in the mean Time, unless it be for capital Crimes, contempt in open Court, or in such Cases wherein some express Law doth allow of, or order the same.^{*}

* The above law was passed March, 1779. Town clerks and particular officers were furnished with a manuscript copy. I have one copy, furnished the town of Barnet.

[Signed.] H. Stevens.

VERMONT'S APPEAL TO THE CANDID AND IMPARTIAL WORLD; CONTAINING A fair Stating of the Claims of Massachusetts Bay, New Hampshire, and New York, The Right the State of Vermont has to Independence, WITH AN Address to the Honorable American Congress and the Inhabitants of the Thirteen United States.

By Stephen R. Bradley, A. M.

The Lord hath called me from the Womb, from the Bowels of my Mother hath he made mention of my Name.

And said unto me, Thou art my Servant, O V! in whom I will be glorified.

And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own Flesh, and they shall be drunken with their own Blood as with sweet Wine; and all Flesh shall know that I the Lord am thy Savior and thy Redeemer, the mighty one of Jacob.—Isaiah xlix.

HARTFORD: PRINTED BY HUDSON AND GOODWIN.

STATE OF VERMONT.

In Council, Arlington, 10th Dec., 1779.

The following Treatise, intitled, Vermont's Appeal to the Candid and Impartial World, containing, &c., being read and carefully perused, is approved of; and *Resolved* , that the same be published to the World.

By Order of the Governor and Council, Joseph Fay, *Secretary*.

This Appeal concludes as follows:

To the Commonality of New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, and New York:

We conclude this address to you, in short, to remind you that your liberties are challenged as well as ours; you are now engaged in a bloody war in defence of the same; remember, the measure you meet out to others, heaven will measure back to you again. Can you stand before the throne of God and seek to be protected and defended in your cause, while you are striving to overthrow and destroy the liberties of the State of Vermont, which stands on as large a scale of reason for independence as any other State on the Continent.

Again we request you seriously to consider whether the object is worth the pursuit, before you rush headlong like the horse into the battle. Force is seldom employed with success to change the opinions, or convince the minds of freemen. But admitting that you should conquer us and affix us to any of your governments. Will that enrich you? Certainly not. Will it make us better neighbors? It cannot. Will our destruction secure your liberties? By no means. What then will you obtain finally for all your trouble and expence, not to say bloodshed?—Nothing but a conquered, depopulated territory, where every single inhabitant will be embittered against you that you will be necessitated to keep a standing army perpetually, to keep them in subjection and support government. And that very army, in time, being accustomed to trample upon the liberties of mankind, will, with the assistance of the disaffected, like the worm at the root of Jonah's gourd, eat up and devour the

whole of your liberties, and thus the righteous Judge of the universe will give that people that deprive Vermont of her rights, slavery to drink, for they will be worthy.

THE END.

A VINDICATION Of the Opposition of the Inhabitants of Vermont To the Government of New York, And their Right to form an Independent State, Humbly submitted to the Consideration of the Impartial World.

BY ETHAN ALLEN.

PRINTED BY ALDEN SPOONER, 1779, *Printer to the State of Vermont.*

STATE OF VERMONT.

In Council, Arlington, 23d Aug., 1779.

Resolved , That the following Vindication be forthwith published, and that a number of the pamphlets be sent to the Congress of the United States, and to the General Assembly of every of these States; and that a number be likewise sent to the Generals and other principal officers of the Continental Army, for their consideration.

Per order of the Governor and Council, Joseph Fay, *Secretary.*

STATE OF VERMONT.

In Convention of the Delegates of the People of the State of Vermont.

Whereas, by an act of the Commissioners of the State of New York, done at New York the seventh day of October, in the fifteenth year of the Independence of the United States of America, one thousand seven hundred and ninety, every impediment, as well on the part of the State of New York as on the part of State of Vermont, to the admission of the State of Vermont into the Union of the United States of America is removed, in full faith and assurance that the same will stand approved and ratified by Congress—

This Convention having impartially deliberated upon the Constitution of the United States of America, as now established, submitted to us by an act of the General Assembly of the State of Vermont, passed October the twenty-seventh, one thousand seven hundred and ninety, do, in virtue of the power and authority to us given for that purpose, fully and entirely approve of, assent to,

ratify, the said Constitution; and declare that immediately from and after this State shall be admitted by the Congress into the Union, and to a full participation of the benefit of the government now enjoyed by the States in the Union, THE SAME SHALL BE BINDING ON US AND THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF VERMONT FOREVER.

Done at Bennington, in the county of Bennington, the tenth day of January, in the fifteenth year of Independence of the United States of America, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-one. In testimony whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names.

Thomas Chittenden, President.

Moses Robinson, Vice President.

Timothy Brownson,

John Fassett,

John Strong,

Jonathan Hunt,

Gideon Olin,

Joshua Wood,

Nathaniel Chipman,

Thomas Hammond,

Benj. Holcomb,

Peter Priggs,

John McNeill,

Oliver Gallup,

Lemuel Chipman,

Samuel Miller,

Israel Smith,
Stephen R. Bradley,
Janna Churchill,
Ebenezer Willson,
Wm. C. Harrington,
Josiah Edson,
Noah Lee,
Isaac Lyman,
Daniel Jewett,
John Forgason,
Reuben Thomas,
Thomas Jewett,
Asaph Fletcher,
Elijah Lovewell,
John Rich,
John Barron,
Amos Brownson,
Oliver Pier,
Nathaniel Stoughton,
Martin Powel,

Nathan Daniels,
Jason Duncan,
John White,
Daniel Shearman,
David Hopkinson,
Daniel Kingsbury,
Samuel Harrison,
Michael Flynn,
Cornelius Lynde,
John N. Bennet,
Jona. Brewster,
Jona. McConnel,
Benj. Henry,
Samuel Lathrop,
Abel Waters,
James Shafter,
Edward Aiken,
Simeon Stevens,
Abel Thompson,
John Shumway,

Silas Hatheway,

Thomas Porter,

John Smith,

Elisha Barber,

William Ward,

Joseph Beeman,

Heman Durkee,

Emanuel Case,

Peter Pennock,

Benj. Green,

Andrew Selden,

John Marsh,

Gardner Chandler,

Timothy Todd,

Calvin Knowlton,

Timothy Bliss,

Elias Curtis,

Samuel Beach,

Benj. Emmons,

Alexr. Brush,

Daniel Gilbert,
Ira Allen,
Timothy Castle,
Eleazer Claghorn,
Silas Tupper,
David Palmer,
Samuel Gott,
Joseph Warner,
Asahel Smith,
Simeon Smith,
Martin Chittenden,
Josiah Pond,
William Slade,
John Spafford,
Peter Sleeman,
Jonas Whitney,
Nathaniel Niles,
Alexr. Harvey,
Wm. Chamberlin,
Daniel Buck,

Daniel Ferrand,
Abraham Morrill,
Beriah Loomis,
Asahel Jackson,
Jonathan Arnold,
Wm. Perry,
Ebenezer Allen,
Enos Wood,
Samuel Hitchcock,

STATE OF VERMONT, BENNINGTON, SS. January 10, 1791.

The foregoing ratification was agreed to, and signed by one hundred and five, and dissented to by four, which is a majority of one hundred and one.

Thos. Chittenden, President.

Attest, Ros. Hopkins, Sec'y of Convention.

AN ACT to prevent the sale and transportation of Negroes and Mulattoes out of this State.

Whereas, by the Constitution of this State, all the subjects of this Commonwealth, of whatever color, are equally entitled to the inestimable blessings of freedom, unless they have forfeited the same by the commission of some crime; and the idea of slavery is expressly and totally excluded from our free government; and whereas instances have happened of former owners of negroes in this Commonwealth making sale of such persons as slaves, notwithstanding their being liberated by the Constitution, and attempts have been made to transport such persons to foreign parts, in open violation of the laws of the land—

Be it therefore enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont , That if any person shall hereafter make sale of any subject of this State, or shall convey, or attempt to convey, any subject

out of this State, with intent to hold or sell such person as a slave—every person so offending, and convicted thereof, shall forfeit and pay to the person injured for such offence, the sum of one hundred pounds, and cost of suit; to be recovered by action of debt complaint, or information.

Passed Oct. 30, 1786.

VIEWS OF THE LEGISLATURE OF 1819.

The committee to whom was referred the petition of the Vermont Colonization Society, praying for the adoption of a resolution approving the object of said Society, made report of the following resolution, viz.:

In General Assembly, Nov. 5, 1819.

Holding as sacred the great principle, "That all men are born equally free and independent, and have certain natural, inherent and inalienable rights, among which, are the enjoying and defending life and liberty, acquiring, possessing, and protecting property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety."

Resolved , That, whilst this General Assembly deeply deplore the degraded and abject situation of the colored population of the United States, and most sensibly feel a sympathy for the white population of the South, on whom, without their own procurement, is entailed a great calamity, it is with heart-felt satisfaction they witness the laudable and humane exertions of many good men from different sections of the country, especially from the Middle and Southern States, in establishing the American Colonization Society, for the purpose of colonizing the free people of color of the United States, on the west coast of Africa, a measure wisely calculated, in the opinion of this General Assembly, to alleviate human woe, and eventually to secure this country from great and impending evils.

Resolved , also, That this Assembly do most cordially approbate the recent organization of the Vermont Society, auxiliary to the Society aforesaid, and cheerfully recommend the same to the favorable consideration and encouragement of the good citizens of this State, confidently hoping that, under the guidance of a beneficent, all-wise, overruling Providence, their benevolent exertions for the extension of human happiness may be crowded with abundant success.

Resolved , also, That the Senators in this State in the Congress of the United States be instructed, and the Representatives requested, to exert their influence for the adoption of such measures as will most effectually promote the great and benevolent views and objects of the Society aforesaid; and

use their best endeavors in support of all constitutional measures to prevent the further extension of that great national evil.

Which resolution was read and adopted.

In General Assembly, Nov. 8, 1819.

Resolved , That a committee, consisting of four members, to join from the council, be appointed, to inquire into the expediency of adopting a memorial to Congress, soliciting that body to prohibit the further introduction of slavery into the territories of the United States, or to instruct our senators and request our representatives in the Congress of United States to use their influence to prohibit the further extension of slavery over the territories of the United States, and that they report to this House as soon as may be.

Which was read and adopted.

In General Assembly, Nov. 11, 1819.

The General Assembly of the State of Vermont view with deep concern the attempt to introduce slavery into the territories of the United States, and to legalize it in States to be admitted into the Union. They regard it as a measure manifestly tending to increase and perpetuate an evil of no ordinary magnitude and danger; of magnitude, as it deprives a portion of mankind of those privileges which republican principle guarantees to all; of danger, as it may, and that possibly at no distant period, subject the master to the vengeance of the slave; and, as it will retain the physical force of the slaveholding States for self-preservation, when it may be most needed for national effort of defence. They regard it as tending to increase the number of slaves; as the extending their territories, and increasing their demand and value, will encourage the violation of all laws made to prohibit their importation; and as tending to perpetuate slavery, by adding the influence and power of States to be formed within our territories, which eventually may constitute a majority of the Union.

They do not perceive that the plea of necessity, on which the existence of slavery can alone be palliated, will extend to the territories of the United States; nor that the principle of compromise, that conceded to the slaveholding States hereafter to be admitted into the Union. They cannot doubt that the powers of Congress are adequate to the effective prohibition of the further introduction of slavery, that they have the supreme power of legislation over the territories for all purposes of national concern, and that they are not bound to assent to the admission of any State into the Union, unless on such conditions as shall be consistent with the general welfare.

The General Assembly do therefore resolve, that our senators be instructed, and our representatives in Congress be requested, to use their influence to prohibit the introduction of slavery in the territories of the United States, and to prevent its being legalized in any State hereafter to be admitted into the Union.

Which was read and adopted, and ordered to lie on the table.

EXTRACT FROM THE GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE, 1820.

The act of the last session of Congress authorizing the inhabitants of a portion of the territory of the United States to form a State government, without a provision in its constitution restricting the power of enslaving a part of the human family, has caused general surprise through the State, and excited feelings of sincere regret. The report of the committee on this subject, which was adopted by the House, and at the close of the last session dismissed, it is presumed, furnishes no evidence of the opinion of that respectable body. Indeed, could I entertain a doubt as to the feelings of the people of Vermont, I should not have troubled you with communicating my own.

Whether, at this period, it is advisable for the Legislature to adopt any measure on the subject, considering the question at rest; or in view of its being again agitated, on the constitution's being submitted for the sanction of Congress; or in view of any feature of that constitution, which may be opposed to those equal rights and privileges professed to be guaranteed by the republican principles of the government, is submitted to the wisdom and discretion of the General Assembly.

In General Assembly, Nov. 15, 1820.

The committee to whom was referred so much of his Excellency's speech as relates to the admission of Missouri into the Union, Report—

That the history of nations demonstrates that involuntary servitude not only plunges the slave into the depths of misery, but renders a great proportion of community dependent and wretched; and the remainder tyrannic and indolent. Opulence acquired by the slavery of others degenerates its possessors, and destroys the physical powers of government. Principles so degrading are inconsistent with the primitive dignity of man, and his natural rights. Slavery is incompatible with the vital principles of all free governments, and tends to their ruin. It paralyzes industry, the greatest source of national wealth, stifles the love of freedom, and endangers the safety of a nation. It is prohibited by the laws of nature, which are binding on governments and individuals. The right to introduce and establish slavery in a free government, doest not exist.

The Declaration of Independence declares as self-evident truths, "That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights: that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness;—that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it." The Constitution of the United States, and of the several States, have recognized these principles as the basis of their governments, and have expressly inhibited the introduction or extension of slavery, or impliedly disavowed the right. The powers of Congress to require the probation of slavery, in the constitution of a State to be admitted as one of the United States, is confirmed by the admission of new States, according to the ordinance of 1787, and by a constitutional guarantee to every State in the Union of a republican form of government. This power in Congress is also admitted in the act of March 6th, 1820, which declares that in all that territory ceded under the name of Louisiana, which lies north of 36° 30' north latitude, slavery and involuntary servitude shall be forever prohibited. Where slavery existed in the States at the time of the adoption of the Constitution of the United States, a spirit of compromise or painful necessity may have excused its continuance; but can never justify its introduction into a State to be admitted from the territories of the United States. Though slavery is not expressly prohibited by the Constitution, yet that invaluable instrument contains powers, first principles, and self-evident truths, which bring us to the same result, and lead us to liberty and justice, and the equal rights of man, from which we ought never to depart. In it is clearly seen a deep and humiliating sense of slavery, and a cheering hope that it would, at some future period, be abolished; and even a determination to do it. It is apparent that servitude produces in the slaveholding States peculiar feelings, local attachments, and separate interests, and should it be extended into new States, it will have a tendency to form a combination of power, which will control the measures of general government; and which cannot be resisted, except by the physical force of the nation. The people of the United States adopted the Constitution to form a more perfect union of the several States, to establish justice, to secure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty; and have thereby blended and inseparably connected the interest, the safety and welfare of every State in the Union. We, therefore, become deeply concerned in the fundamental principles of the constitution of any new State to be admitted into the Union. Whatever powers are necessary to carry into effect the great objects of the Union, are implied in the Constitution, and vested in the several departments of the general government. The act of the United States authorizing a provisional admission of the inhabitants of Missouri into the Union as a State, does not pledge the faith of government to admit, upon their forming, and presenting to Congress for approbation, a constitution or system of State government. For that constitution, by the act, must be republican, and not repugnant to the Constitution of the United States. From information it is to be seriously apprehended that

Missouri will present to Congress, for their approbation, a constitution which declares that the general assembly shall have no power to pass laws—first, for the emancipation of slaves without the consent of their owners, or without paying them, before emancipation, a full equivalent for such slaves so emancipated; and secondly, to prevent emigrants from bringing slaves into said State, so long as slavery is legalized therein. It is also made the imperious duty of its legislature to pass laws, as soon as may be, to prevent free negroes and mulattoes from coming to and settling in that State, under any pretence whatever. These powers, restrictions, and provisions, to legalize and perpetuate slavery, and to prevent citizens of the United States, on account of their origin, color, or features, from migrating to Missouri, are repugnant to a republican government, and in direct violation of the Constitution of the United States. If Missouri be permitted to introduce and legalize slavery by her constitution, and we consent to her admission, we shall justly incur the charge of insincerity in our civil institution, and in all our processions of attachment to liberty. It will bring upon the Constitution and Declaration of Independence a deep stain, which cannot be forgotten or blotted out. It will deeply affect the Union in its resources, political interests, and character. The admission of another new State into the Union with a constitution which guarantees security and protection to slavery, and the cruel and unnatural traffic of any portion of the human race, will be an error which the Union cannot correct, and an evil which may endanger the freedom of the nation. Congress never ought, and we trust never will, plant the standard of the Union in Missouri to wave over the heads of involuntary slaves, who have nothing they can call their own except their sorrows and their sufferings, and a life beyond the grave; and who can never taste the sweets of liberty, unless they obtain it by force or by flight. Nor can a community made up of masters and slaves ever enjoy the blessings of liberty, and the benefits of a free government; these enjoyments are reserved for a community of freemen, who are subject to none but God and the laws. The committee thereupon submit, for the consideration of the General Assembly, the following resolutions, viz:—

Resolved , In the opinion of this Legislature, slavery or involuntary servitude, in any of the United States, is a moral and political evil; and that its continuance can be justified by necessity alone;—that Congress has a right to inhibit any further introduction or extension of slavery, as one of the conditions upon which any new State shall be admitted into the Union.

Resolved , That this Legislature views with regret and alarm the attempt of the inhabitants of Missouri to obtain admission into the Union, as one of the United States, under a constitution which legalizes and secures the introduction and continuance of slavery; and, also, contains provisions to prevent freemen of the United States from emigrating to and settling in Missouri, on account of their origin, color, or features. And that, in the opinion of this Legislature, these principles, powers and restrictions, contained in the reported constitution of Missouri, are anti-republican and repugnant to the Constitution of the United States, and subversive of the unalienable rights of man.

Resolved , That the senators from this State in the Congress of the United States be instructed, and the representatives be requested, to exert their influence, and use all legal means, to prevent the admission of Missouri, as a State, into the Union of the United States, with those anti-republican features and powers in their constitution.

Resolved , That the Secretary of State be requested to transmit a copy of the foregoing report and resolutions to each of the senators and representatives of this State in the Congress of the United States.

Which report was read and accepted, and the resolutions adopted.

FROM GEN. WASHINGTON.

To Elijah Paine and Isaac Tichenor, Esqrs., Senators in Congress from the State of Vermont:

Gentlemen: With particular pleasure I receive the unanimous address of the Council and General Assembly of the State of Vermont. Although but lately admitted into the Union, yet the importance of your State, its love of liberty and its energy, were manifested in the earliest periods of the revolution which established our independence. Unconnected in name only, but in reality united with the confederated States, these felt and acknowledged the benefits of your cooperation. Their mutual safety and advantage, duly appreciated, will never permit this Union to be dissolved.

I enjoy great happiness in the testimony you have presented, and in the other proofs exhibited from various parts of our country, that the operations of the General Government have justified the hopes of our citizens at its formation, which is recognized as the era of national prosperity. The voluntary acknowledgements of my fellow-citizens persuade me to believe that my agency has contributed to produce this effect. This belief will be to me a source of permanent satisfaction, and those acknowledgments a rich reward.

My sincere thanks are due, and I beg you, gentlemen, to make them acceptable to the Council and General Assembly of the State of Vermont, for the very obliging and affectionate terms in which they notice me and my public services. To such confidence and support as I have experienced from Councils, Legislative Assemblies, and the great body of the American citizens, I owed the best exertions of every faculty I possessed: happy now in the reflection that our joint labors have been crowned with success. When withdrawn to the shade of private life, I shall view with growing pleasure the increasing prosperity of the United States; in the perfect protection of their government, I trust to enjoy my retirement in tranquility; and then, while indulging a favorite wish of

my heart in agricultural pursuits, I may hope to make even my private business and amusement of some used to my country.

G. WASHINGTON.

United States, 12th Dec., 1796.

FROM PRESIDENT ADAMS.

To The Legislature of the State of Vermont:

Gentlemen—

Your address of the twenty-fourth of October has been forwarded to me, as you desired, by his Excellency, Isaac Tichenor, your worthy Governor. Among all the addresses which have been presented to me from communities, corporations, towns, cities, and legislatures, there has been none more acceptable to me, or which has affected my sensibility or commanded my gratitude, than this very sentimental compliment from the Legislature of the State of Vermont—a State which, within my memory, has been converted from a wilderness to a fruitful field.—Knowing, as I do, your original and progress, and the brave, hardy, industrious, and temperate character of the people, the approbation of their representatives, their attachment to the Constitution and determination to support the government, are the more to be esteemed.

While we truly consider government as the association of the honest, the pious, and the peaceable, to protect themselves from the wickedness of the dishonest, the impious and unruly, we would never forget that government, at the same time, ought to protect the impious and unruly, not only from the fraud and fury of each other, but from the errors, mistakes, and weaknesses of the honest and pious.

There is too much truth in your observations, that the most excellent governments have had their archives disgraced with impediments of opposition, and frequent insurrections. The cause of it is, that while the honest and pious are always disposed to submit to good government, and choose the mildest, the dishonest and impious take advantage of the feeble restraint to commit mischief, because it can be done with impunity. This, in course, introduces the necessity of severe curbs for the wicked, and then the sordid animal becomes too tame under the curb, the lash, and the spur. While a tenderness of blood and a respect for human life is preserved among the people, however, there is not much danger, even from tumults. This maxim preserved the Romans, who for four

hundred years never shed the blood of a man in a sedition. An example worthy the contemplation and imitation of all other republics.

The French have rendered it impossible for us to follow them in their notions and projects of government, or to submit to their arbitrary conduct and extravagant exactions from us. We must therefore defend ourselves against all they can attempt.

It is not possible for my fellow citizens to say anything more glorious or delightful to me than that they regard me because they love their country.

John Adams.

Philadelphia, 30th November, 1798.

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